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LETTER DATED 26 JANUARY 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF QATAR TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to write to you in my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group at the United Nations and to express the Group's grave concern and outrage over the turn of events in Kosovo, in particular the cold-blooded massacre of 45 innocent Muslim civilians in the village of Racak on 15 January 1999, during the holy month of Ramadan.

The Islamic Group, viewing this tragic event as yet another indication of the ongoing Serbian policy of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, has adopted a statement, the text of which I enclose for your perusal (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would kindly arrange for this communication and the enclosed statement to be circulated as documents of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ali Fahad Faleh A. AL-HAJRI
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar
to the United Nations
Chairman of the Islamic Group

Annex

Statement on the situation in Kosovo issued on 26 January 1999 by the Islamic Group at the United Nations in New York

The Islamic Group at the United Nations is gravely concerned about the developments in Kosovo, in particular the cold-blooded and premeditated massacre of 45 innocent Muslim civilians on 15 January 1999 in the village of Racak, during the holy month of Ramadan.

The Islamic Group expresses deep shock and anger over the Racak massacre, which was reminiscent of the widespread crimes of genocide and ethnic cleansing witnessed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and strongly condemns the massacre of innocent civilians and the ongoing Serbian policy of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. The Islamic Group expresses its full solidarity with the people of Kosovo.

The Group:

(a) Strongly condemns crimes against humanity being committed by the Serbian security forces in Kosovo;

(b) Takes note of the statement by the President of the Security Council of 19 January 1999 (S/PRST/1999/2), which has been ignored by Belgrade;

(c) Urges the Security Council to take action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to ensure the safety and security of all inhabitants of Kosovo, implementation by Belgrade of its undertakings and implementation of the demands of the Albanian leadership of Kosovo;

(d) Notes, with grave concern, the failure of the Belgrade authorities to cooperate with the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, a further indication of their continuing violation of international law, of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the annexes thereto (collectively the "Peace Agreement"), initialled at Dayton, United States of America;

(e) Demands full cooperation by Belgrade with the investigations being conducted by the International Tribunal into the Racak massacre, as well as into other crimes against humanity being committed by Serbian forces, and in bringing the criminals to justice;

(f) Also demands that Belgrade adhere to the need for the full protection of lives, and that it respect the rights and property of all inhabitants of Kosovo;

(g) Further demands the cessation of all atrocities and crimes against humanity by the Serbian forces;

(h) Further demands the withdrawal of all Serbian forces from Kosovo;

(i) Urges the international community to extend every possible form of humanitarian assistance to the oppressed people of Kosovo;

(j) Urges a just, comprehensive and peaceful solution of the crisis through dialogue, which should include representatives of all national communities of Kosovo.